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SOUTHEAST INFORMATION OFFICE: Atlanta, Ga.

Technical information: (404) 893-4222 • BLSInfoAtlanta@bls.gov • www.bls.gov/regions/southeast

Media contact: (404) 893-4220

Occupational Employment and Wages in Knoxville – May 2014

Workers in the Knoxville Metropolitan Statistical Area had an average (mean) hourly wage of \$19.92 in May 2014, about 12 percent below the nationwide average of \$22.71, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Regional Commissioner Janet S. Rankin noted that, after testing for statistical significance, wages in the local area were higher than their respective national averages in 1 of the 22 major occupational groups. Nineteen groups had significantly lower wages than their respective national averages, including management; computer and mathematical; and arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media.

When compared to the nationwide distribution, local employment was more highly concentrated in 8 of the 22 occupational groups, including office and administrative support; healthcare practitioners and technical; and production. Conversely, 12 groups had employment shares significantly below their national representation, including business and financial operations; education, training, and library; and computer and mathematical. (See [table A](#) and [box note](#) at end of release.)

Table A. Occupational employment and wages by major occupational group, United States and the Knoxville Metropolitan Statistical Area, and measures of statistical significance, May 2014

| Major occupational group | Percent of total employment | | Mean hourly wage | | |
|---|-----------------------------|-----------|------------------|-----------|-----------------------------------|
| | United States | Knoxville | United States | Knoxville | Percent difference ⁽¹⁾ |
| Total, all occupations..... | 100.0% | 100.0% | \$22.71 | \$19.92* | -12 |
| Management..... | 5.0 | 5.8* | 54.08 | 45.15* | -17 |
| Business and financial operations..... | 5.1 | 3.7* | 34.81 | 30.31* | -13 |
| Computer and mathematical..... | 2.8 | 2.0* | 40.37 | 32.57* | -19 |
| Architecture and engineering..... | 1.8 | 1.9* | 39.19 | 39.41 | 1 |
| Life, physical, and social science..... | 0.8 | 0.7* | 33.69 | 32.70 | -3 |
| Community and social services..... | 1.4 | 1.1* | 21.79 | 17.57* | -19 |
| Legal..... | 0.8 | 0.6* | 48.61 | 43.32* | -11 |
| Education, training, and library..... | 6.2 | 4.9* | 25.10 | 22.28* | -11 |
| Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media..... | 1.3 | 1.0* | 26.82 | 21.29* | -21 |
| Healthcare practitioner and technical..... | 5.8 | 6.9* | 36.54 | 32.39* | -11 |
| Healthcare support..... | 2.9 | 2.5* | 13.86 | 13.14* | -5 |
| Protective service..... | 2.4 | 1.9* | 21.14 | 17.23* | -18 |
| Food preparation and serving related..... | 9.1 | 9.7* | 10.57 | 9.40* | -11 |
| Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance..... | 3.2 | 3.9* | 12.68 | 11.50* | -9 |
| Personal care and service..... | 3.1 | 3.1 | 12.01 | 10.94* | -9 |
| Sales and related..... | 10.5 | 10.0* | 18.59 | 16.03* | -14 |
| Office and administrative support..... | 16.0 | 17.8* | 17.08 | 15.52* | -9 |

Table A. Occupational employment and wages by major occupational group, United States and the Knoxville Metropolitan Statistical Area, and measures of statistical significance, May 2014 - Continued

| Major occupational group | Percent of total employment | | Mean hourly wage | | |
|--|-----------------------------|-----------|------------------|-----------|-----------------------------------|
| | United States | Knoxville | United States | Knoxville | Percent difference ⁽¹⁾ |
| Farming, fishing, and forestry..... | 0.3 | 0.1* | 12.09 | 15.97* | 32 |
| Construction and extraction..... | 3.9 | 3.4* | 22.40 | 18.83* | -16 |
| Installation, maintenance, and repair..... | 3.9 | 4.6* | 21.74 | 19.70* | -9 |
| Production..... | 6.6 | 7.4* | 17.06 | 16.13* | -5 |
| Transportation and material moving..... | 6.8 | 7.1 | 16.57 | 15.60* | -6 |

⁽¹⁾ A positive percent difference measures how much the mean wage in Knoxville is above the national mean wage, while a negative difference reflects a lower wage.

* The percent share of employment or mean hourly wage for this area is significantly different from the national average of all areas at the 90-percent confidence level.

One occupational group—office and administrative support—was chosen to illustrate the diversity of data available for any of the 22 major occupational categories. Knoxville had 58,800 jobs in office and administrative support, accounting for 17.8 percent of local area employment, significantly higher than the 16.0-percent share nationally. The average hourly wage for this occupational group locally was \$15.52, significantly below the national wage of \$17.08.

Some of the largest detailed occupations within the office and administrative support group included customer service representatives (7,660), office clerks, general (7,370), and stock clerks and order fillers (6,100). Among the higher paying jobs were production, planning, and expediting clerks and postal service mail carriers, with mean hourly wages of \$31.58 and \$24.70, respectively. At the lower end of the wage scale were hotel, motel, and resort desk clerks (\$9.28) and stock clerks and order fillers (\$11.06). (Detailed occupational data for office and administrative support are presented in [table 1](#); for a complete listing of detailed occupations available go to www.bls.gov/oes/2014/may/oes_28940.htm.)

Location quotients allow us to explore the occupational make-up of a metropolitan area by comparing the composition of jobs in an area relative to the national average. (See [table 1](#).) For example, a location quotient of 2.0 indicates that an occupation accounts for twice the share of employment in the area than it does nationally. In the Knoxville Metropolitan Statistical Area, above-average concentrations of employment were found in some of the occupations within the office and administrative support group. For instance, recordkeeping weighers, measurers, checkers, and samplers were employed at 2.9 times the national rate in Knoxville, and order clerks at 2.2 times the U.S. average. On the other hand, shipping, receiving, and traffic clerks had a location quotient of 1.0 in Knoxville, indicating that this particular occupation's local and national employment shares were similar.

These statistics are from the Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey, a federal-state cooperative program between BLS and State Workforce Agencies, in this case, the Tennessee Department of Labor & Workforce Development.

Note

A value that is statistically different from another does not necessarily mean that the difference has economic or practical significance. Statistical significance is concerned with the ability to make confident statements about a universe based on a sample. It is entirely possible that a large difference between two values is not significantly different statistically, while a small difference is, since both the size and heterogeneity of the sample affect the relative error of the data being tested.

Technical Note

The Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey is a semiannual mail survey measuring occupational employment and wage rates for wage and salary workers in nonfarm establishments in the United States. Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands are also surveyed, but their data are not included in the national estimates. OES estimates are constructed from a sample of about 1.2 million establishments. Forms are mailed to approximately 200,000 sampled establishments in May and November each year. May 2014 estimates are based on responses from six semiannual panels collected over a 3-year period: May 2014, November 2013, May 2013, November 2012, May 2012, and November 2011. The overall national response rate for the six panels is 74.3 percent based on establishments and 70.5 percent based on weighted sampled employment. The unweighted employment of sampled establishments across all six semiannual panels represents approximately 57.1 percent of total national employment. (Response rates are slightly lower for these estimates due to the federal shutdown in October 2013.) The sample in the Knoxville Metropolitan Statistical Area included 2,852 establishments with a response rate of 69 percent. For more information about OES concepts and methodology, go to www.bls.gov/news.release/ocwage.tn.htm.

The OES survey provides estimates of employment and hourly and annual wages for wage and salary workers in 22 major occupational groups and 821 detailed occupations for the nation, states, metropolitan statistical areas, metropolitan divisions, and nonmetropolitan areas. In addition, employment and wage estimates for 94 minor groups and 458 broad occupations are available in the national data. OES data by state and metropolitan/nonmetropolitan area are available from www.bls.gov/oes/current/oessrcst.htm and www.bls.gov/oes/current/oessrcma.htm, respectively.

The May 2014 OES estimates are based on the 2010 Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system and the 2012 North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). Information about the 2010 SOC is available on the BLS website at www.bls.gov/soc and information about the 2012 NAICS is available at www.bls.gov/bls/naics.htm.

Area definitions

The substate area data published in this release reflect the standards and definitions established by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget.

The **Knoxville, Tenn. Metropolitan Statistical Area** includes Anderson, Blount, Knox, Loudon, and Union Counties.

Additional information

OES data are available on our regional web page at www.bls.gov/regions/southeast. Answers to frequently asked questions about the OES data are available at www.bls.gov/oes/oes_ques.htm. Detailed technical information about the OES survey is available in our Survey Methods and Reliability Statement on the BLS website at www.bls.gov/oes/2014/may/methods_statement.pdf.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: 202-691-5200; Federal Relay Service: 800-877-8339.

Table 1. Employment and wage data from the Occupational Employment Statistics survey, by occupation, Knoxville Metropolitan Statistical Area, May 2014

| Occupation ⁽¹⁾ | Employment | | Mean wages | |
|--|----------------------|----------------------------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| | Level ⁽²⁾ | Location quotient ⁽³⁾ | Hourly | Annual ⁽⁴⁾ |
| Office and Administrative Support Occupations..... | 58,800 | 1.1 | \$15.52 | \$32,290 |
| First-Line Supervisors of Office and Administrative Support Workers..... | 3,710 | 1.1 | 24.03 | 49,980 |
| Switchboard Operators, Including Answering Service..... | 400 | 1.5 | 11.71 | 24,360 |
| Bill and Account Collectors..... | 2,520 | 3.0 | 13.25 | 27,570 |
| Billing and Posting Clerks..... | 1,520 | 1.3 | 14.79 | 30,770 |
| Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks..... | 4,580 | 1.2 | 16.49 | 34,290 |
| Payroll and Timekeeping Clerks..... | 410 | 1.0 | 18.74 | 38,980 |
| Procurement Clerks..... | 140 | 0.8 | 16.80 | 34,950 |
| Tellers..... | 980 | 0.8 | 12.46 | 25,930 |
| Financial Clerks, All Other..... | 80 | 0.8 | 17.50 | 36,400 |
| Brokerage Clerks..... | 140 | 1.0 | 22.31 | 46,410 |
| Court, Municipal, and License Clerks..... | 560 | 1.8 | 17.10 | 35,580 |
| Credit Authorizers, Checkers, and Clerks..... | 90 | 0.8 | 16.74 | 34,820 |
| Customer Service Representatives..... | 7,660 | 1.3 | 13.81 | 28,720 |
| Eligibility Interviewers, Government Programs..... | 230 | 0.8 | 15.98 | 33,240 |
| File Clerks..... | 410 | 1.1 | 12.15 | 25,260 |
| Hotel, Motel, and Resort Desk Clerks..... | 750 | 1.3 | 9.28 | 19,290 |
| Interviewers, Except Eligibility and Loan..... | 780 | 1.7 | 12.62 | 26,250 |
| Library Assistants, Clerical..... | 160 | 0.6 | 12.85 | 26,730 |
| Loan Interviewers and Clerks..... | 540 | 1.1 | 16.46 | 34,240 |
| New Accounts Clerks..... | 70 | 0.5 | 17.78 | 36,980 |
| Order Clerks..... | 1,040 | 2.2 | 12.25 | 25,470 |
| Human Resources Assistants, Except Payroll and Timekeeping..... | 430 | 1.3 | 15.72 | 32,690 |
| Receptionists and Information Clerks..... | 2,140 | 0.9 | 12.96 | 26,960 |
| Reservation and Transportation Ticket Agents and Travel Clerks..... | ⁽⁵⁾ | ⁽⁵⁾ | 14.53 | 30,210 |
| Information and Record Clerks, All Other..... | 300 | 0.7 | 18.57 | 38,630 |
| Cargo and Freight Agents..... | 50 | 0.3 | 16.93 | 35,220 |
| Couriers and Messengers..... | 100 | 0.6 | 11.75 | 24,440 |
| Police, Fire, and Ambulance Dispatchers..... | 170 | 0.7 | 14.24 | 29,620 |
| Dispatchers, Except Police, Fire, and Ambulance..... | 600 | 1.3 | 20.72 | 43,100 |
| Meter Readers, Utilities..... | 90 | 1.0 | ⁽⁵⁾ | ⁽⁵⁾ |
| Postal Service Clerks..... | 130 | 0.7 | 23.29 | 48,430 |
| Postal Service Mail Carriers..... | 640 | 0.9 | 24.70 | 51,380 |
| Postal Service Mail Sorters, Processors, and Processing Machine Operators..... | 330 | 1.1 | 24.28 | 50,500 |
| Production, Planning, and Expediting Clerks..... | 1,290 | 1.8 | 31.58 | 65,690 |
| Shipping, Receiving, and Traffic Clerks..... | 1,680 | 1.0 | 13.78 | 28,670 |
| Stock Clerks and Order Fillers..... | 6,100 | 1.3 | 11.06 | 23,000 |
| Weighers, Measurers, Checkers, and Samplers, Recordkeeping..... | 500 | 2.9 | 17.09 | 35,540 |
| Executive Secretaries and Executive Administrative Assistants..... | 1,470 | 0.8 | 21.76 | 45,260 |
| Legal Secretaries..... | 450 | 0.9 | 19.35 | 40,240 |
| Medical Secretaries..... | 670 | 0.5 | 14.00 | 29,110 |
| Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive..... | 5,980 | 1.1 | 15.09 | 31,390 |
| Computer Operators..... | 250 | 1.8 | 19.44 | 40,430 |
| Data Entry Keyers..... | 370 | 0.7 | 12.69 | 26,390 |
| Insurance Claims and Policy Processing Clerks..... | 200 | 0.3 | 16.85 | 35,040 |
| Mail Clerks and Mail Machine Operators, Except Postal Service..... | 80 | 0.3 | 12.97 | 26,980 |
| Office Clerks, General..... | 7,370 | 1.0 | 14.18 | 29,500 |
| Office Machine Operators, Except Computer..... | 150 | 0.9 | 11.54 | 24,010 |

Table 1. Employment and wage data from the Occupational Employment Statistics survey, by occupation, Knoxville Metropolitan Statistical Area, May 2014 - Continued

| Occupation ⁽¹⁾ | Employment | | Mean wages | |
|---|----------------------|----------------------------------|------------|-----------------------|
| | Level ⁽²⁾ | Location quotient ⁽³⁾ | Hourly | Annual ⁽⁴⁾ |
| Office and Administrative Support Workers, All Other..... | 320 | 0.6 | 14.16 | 29,460 |

⁽¹⁾ For a complete listing of all detailed occupations in Knoxville, TN, see www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_28940.htm.

⁽²⁾ Estimates for detailed occupations do not sum to the totals because the totals include occupations not shown separately. Estimates do not include self-employed workers.

⁽³⁾ The location quotient is the ratio of the area concentration of occupational employment to the national average concentration. A location quotient greater than one indicates the occupation has a higher share of employment than average, and a location quotient less than one indicates the occupation is less prevalent in the area than average.

⁽⁴⁾ Annual wages have been calculated by multiplying the hourly mean wage by a 'year-round, full-time' hours figure of 2,080 hours; for those occupations where there is not an hourly mean wage published, the annual wage has been directly calculated from the reported survey data.

⁽⁵⁾ Estimate not released.